

of the "Life". Cushing used to go over to Oxford in the summer to work on it, taking with him a staff of secretaries. He would return each autumn to his hospital and other work at Harvard, though still continuing to weave the threads of his master design. Every volume in Osler's library was searched through by him for the multitudinous details which Osler was so fond of adding, either by pencilled note, or clipping, or picture. More than one valuable literary chain has been completed by details thus found amongst these miscellanies.

The mass of material at Cushing's disposal was almost terrifying in quantity. Only the severest labour could reduce it to usefulness, and only a highly trained sense of selection could have made it attractive. But Cushing's achievements, first in surgery and next in literature, had shown him to be possessed of these capacities in the highest degree. It will be enough to add, in reflecting on these unusual labours, that much of his work was carried on under the handicap of crippling pain from an obstinate neuritis which had developed during his war service in France.

Most of the MS. material from which he worked is preserved in the Osler Library, well indexed and arranged. Cushing sent it all to Dr. Francis some years ago, saying in a letter to him:

"I hadn't any idea how much it would cover printed until one evening I got Greenslit of Houghton Mifflin's to come out and look at it, and he said it would be at least three volumes, which scared me and I began promptly to cut it down with pain and tears. The next copy was the one Julia Shepley took to Oxford, to be O.K'd by Lady Osler and Mrs. Chapin, as you will remember. And that one was abbreviated as much as I dared when you were there giving me such valuable aid.

Whether (the MS. material) will be of any interest to you I cannot imagine. I suppose it can be burnt up in Montreal as well as here."

But, of course, nothing was burnt. There is enough unused material to make another volume, and Dr. Francis extracts bits from it now and then, witness the anonymous letter to Osler about body-snatching to which he drew attention in these pages last month (page 493).

If one is interested in seeing an author at work, the MS. of Cushing's book is as good an example as one could ask for. Even on such an apparently small detail as his preface the greatest trouble was expended. Nine drafts of it were made before the tenth and final version was evolved, and even that bears his corrections. The first draft began with the sentence, "This narrative in the making has grown to undue length". At the foot of the page he has scribbled, "If the narrative is of undue length" says Chapman of the Press, "Why publish it?" That was excellent criticism, but Cushing clung tenaciously to his sentence until the sixth revision, when he had reduced it to "This long narrative, etc." Here another scribble appears, "This the Press also refuses; it would affect sales!" There was but one thing to do, and that was to cast the whole sentence out and begin afresh.

Only Cushing knew how long the book was, measured in terms of his labour. Not that he even thought about that side of it. What he wanted to say was that, long as it might be, it was not too long for the importance of the subject, and also, as already explained, he meant it mainly to be a source from which others could draw. He also adds to the sixth draft of the preface the note, "A little of W. H. Welch, a little of Sir Walter Fletcher, a little of W. W. Francis, a little of Harvey Cushing." So it is very evident that he shared his troubles.

To let the subject of a biography speak for himself sounds simple enough, but the biographer actually must be much more than a mere showman. Cushing has shown a complete mastery of this difficult technique of anonymous ubiquity, "the power of art without the show". His name occurs nowhere in the text of the book: he is only to be recognized as one of the "latch-keyers". It is as if he made a special point of keeping his name out, and that, under the circumstances, is carrying the virtue of a biographer a little too far. If that is a criticism of his work, it is the only one which it seems possible to make.

---

## Association Notes

### Report of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met in Ottawa on October 24 and 25, 1940, with all members but two present. Among the sixty-five items on the agenda the following will be found to be of chief interest to our members:

Preliminary arrangements have been completed for the Seventy-second Annual Meeting to be held in the Royal Alexandra Hotel, Winnipeg, on June 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 1941. The Saskatchewan Division has arranged to conduct its annual business session in Winnipeg on that occasion.

The Alberta Division has recommended that the Annual Meeting in 1942 be held in Jasper.

The Canadian Medical Institute reported that policy holders now accepting periodic health examinations under the auspices of the Institute may consult any doctor of their choice without reference to a nominated list. This is in line with recommendations made by the Association from time to time. The decision will be welcomed by the profession.

The Cancer Department reported on the statistical study of cancer cases reported by various Study Groups throughout Canada.

Dr. M. R. Bow, of Edmonton, was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Public Health, vice Dr. F. W. Jackson, of Winnipeg, who was forced to resign because of ill health.

It was decided to reprint in booklet form the twelve articles which have appeared in the

*Journal* from the pen of Mr. H. H. Wolfenden, consulting actuary of the Association. The booklets will be distributed to the profession with the compliments of the Association.

An analysis of gift funds received by the Association during the past fifteen years discloses that a sum exceeding \$500,000 has been donated to the Association during this period to be devoted to the following activities: Extra Mural Post-graduate Education, Hospital Service, Health Education, Cancer, Radio Broadcasting, and Nutrition. During this fifteen-year period the gift funds of the Association have exceeded membership fees.

The membership for the year 1940 is 4,644, which is a gain of 611 over the year 1939.

Plans for a membership campaign were further developed, and it is understood that all the Divisions propose to undertake a thorough canvass of the profession in the respective provinces in the immediate future, having in view bringing into membership every eligible medical practitioner in Canada.

The Committee had a very satisfactory interview with Major-General LaFleche, Associate Deputy Minister of the Department of National War Services. The medical aspects of recruiting were discussed and plans well advanced for suitable arrangements being carried out for hospital interns and medical students to receive their month's military training at the most convenient season.

A very satisfactory interview was held with Major Power, Minister of National Defence for Air, and arrangements were completed to co-operate with the air service in a manner analogous to the co-operation which has existed between the Army and the Association since the outbreak of the war.

On the recommendation of the Section of Ophthalmology, an inquiry has been instituted throughout Canada with respect to the medical teaching which is being given to non-medical students in this field.

The Section of Pædiatrics recommended the issuing of a small booklet on immunization. This question is being studied with the Public Health Departments.

With a view to making our *Journal* more attractive to our French-Canadian colleagues, the Editorial Board was authorized to develop communications and abstracts in the *Journal* in the French language.

The Committee learned with satisfaction that reciprocity had been granted to Canadian medical graduates by the General Medical Council of Great Britain for the duration of the war.

The conferences which have been held in the east and the west in past years have been so successful that it was agreed that the principle of zone conferences be approved, and these will be held from time to time as desired by various sections of Canada.

It was agreed that steps should be taken to keep senior medical students and interns more thoroughly acquainted with the aims and objects of the Association in order to enlist their allegiance and membership at the earliest opportunity.

The Executive welcomed most heartily into affiliation the First Canadian Division Medical Society, now overseas.

It was agreed that, on the recommendation of the respective Divisions, members of the Association engaged in full time military service, and not engaged in any form of private practice, will be exempted from the payment of the annual fee for the year 1941.

The question of receiving and caring for British War Guest children was again reviewed. The profession in Canada is ready to receive 1,500 of these children when and if arrangements can be completed on the other side to send them out. Medical care of all war guest children was left to the individual provinces to deal with.

The Code of Ethics has now been made available for distribution throughout Canada, 5,000 copies having been printed in the French language.

The four Western Provinces reported splendid annual meetings held in sequence during the month of September, when they were visited by a team of travelling speakers, including the President, Dr. Duncan Graham, Dr. Harold Wookey, Dr. Walter Scriver, Dr. J. H. Couch, and the General Secretary.

Income Tax regulations have been revised and are of interest to the medical profession. It is anticipated that a final statement from the Department will be available for publication well in advance of the time of making returns for the year 1940.

The Honorary Treasurer reports that, despite the war, the finances of the Association are in a satisfactory condition. As Managing Editor, he also reports that the advertising account in connection with the *Journal* may be regarded as satisfactory.

Correspondence with the Foreign Exchange Control Board was tabled, dealing with the question of medical certification of Canadians desiring to proceed to the United States for medical treatment or other health reasons. With a view to conserving American exchange, permission to go to the United States for health reasons will only be granted under extreme circumstances.

The Hospital Service Department reports another useful and satisfactory year.

The question of Industrial Medicine, having regard to the pressure under which Canadian workers are placed due to war activities, is being studied by the C.M.A.C.

The foregoing summary will indicate to the members the diversity of interests and problems which your committee has to consider.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

T. C. ROUTLEY, *General Secretary*.